لا إله إلا الله محمد رسول الله

إن الدين عند الله الإسلام

THE REVIEW OF RELIGIONS

Tabuk 1347—September 1968

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EDITORS

S. D. AHMAD M. G. AHMAD

THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT IN ISLAM

The Promised Messiah, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was born in 1835 in Qadian, a village in India. In the eighties of the 19th century, he was called to the office of world Reformer to combat the current of anti-religious philosophies and to explode the Christian theory of redemption based on the fiction of Christ's death on the Cross and to tell the Christians and Muslims to call off their hope for a second visit from Christ as he had been gathered to his forefathers and barred like all mortals from coming back to the world; and that he, the Promised Messiah, had come instead.

The Promised Messiah initiated the Ahmadiyya Movement (1) to revive Faith in God, challenging rival churches to a spiritual contest to seek Divine sanction for the religion He favoured, through prayer and appeal to Him for guidance and arbitration in the matter, by means of His signs (2) to re-establish the glory of the Holy Prophet Muhammad and to expound and disseminate spiritual beauties and moral excellencies of the teachings of the Holy Quran (3) to wean men from war-like tendencies and to educate world opinion in favour of renunciation of war as a means of settling disputes (4) to infuse hope, faith and courage in the drooping hearts of Muslims and all the depressed races and nations of the world (5) to warn the exploiters, slave-drivers, and pedlars in sin against the evil consequences of their evil ways (6) to collect under one banner all the true followers of Islam and lovers of peace and (7) to inculcate among them the spirit of tolerance, goodwill and self-less fellow-service and a feeling of true brotherhood.

The Promised Messiah passed away in 1908 and was succeeded by his foremost votary and closest companion Hazrat Haji Hakim Maulvi Nooruddin as Khalifatul Masih I. After his death in 1914, the Promised Son of the Promised Messiah, Hazrat Haji Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad was chosen as Khalifatul Masih II. During his 52 years of Imamat Khalifatul Masih II organized a world-girdling chain of mosques and missions. On his death on November 8, 1965, the electoral college named with one accord Hafiz Mirza Nasir Ahmad, the late Khalifatul Masih's son and the Promised Messiah's grandson, Khalifatul Masih III.

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For further information about the Movement. its activities and aims and objectives or literature, enquiries may be addressed to the nearest Ahmadiyya Mission or direct to

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The Institution of Interest *(Riba)* in the Light of Islamic Injunctions

Malik Saif-ur-Rahman

In this article I have used the word interest as equivalent to ربوا (Riba) which is strictly prohibited in Islam. The Holy Quran says :

يمحق الله الربوا و يربى الصدقاة و الله لا يحب كل كفار اثيم- ان الذين آمنوا و عملوا الصلحت و اقاموا الصلوة و اتوا الزكوة لهم اجرهم عند ربهم ولا خوف عليهم ولا هم يحزنون - يا ايها الذين آمنوا اتقوا الله وذروا مابقى من الربوا ان كنتم مومنين فان لم تفعلوا فاذنوا بحرب من الله و رسوله و ان تبتم فلكم رؤس اموالكم لا تظلمون و لا تظلمون .

"Allah will abolish interest and will cause charity to increase. And Allah loves not anyone who is a confirmed disbeliever and arch-sinner. Surely

those who believe and do good deeds, and observe prayer and pay the Zakat, shall have their reward from their Lord, and no fear shall come on them, nor shall they grieve. O, ye who believe! Fear Allah and relinquish what remains of interest, if you are believers. But if you do it not, then beware of war from Allah and His Messenger; and if you repent, then you shall have your original sums; thus you shall not wrong; nor shall you be wronged". (2:277-280)

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It is futile to debate whether Interest is permitted or not in Islam, for the divine commandment in this regard is so unequivocal nor need we probe into the why of it; so much has already been said on the unwholesome effects of interest that any further elaboration tends to be a monotonous repetition. I am afraid I have nothing to add on this aspect of the subject. I shall be limiting myself in this article to the definition of interest, pointing out the essential difference between interest and profit, attempting to explain why interest is prohibited, while profit is not only permitted, but also regarded as having been touched with divine grace, and a blessed source of income at that.

Interest or *Riba* means an increase or addition; in economics, however, the term stands for a fixed rate of increase on the principal sum. Profit, on the other hand, implies an indefinite increase depending on market conditions. When the invested capital registers decrease, profit plummets to zero; and when it remains constant, increase on the original sum will be profit.

The other difference between profit and interest is that profit implies effort, direct or indirect, which may be called enterprise; since profit is impossible without the process of production; whereas interest dispenses with labour and effort; it needs only principal sum to grow. It has nothing to do with organization and effort; it is not concerned if the capital goes up or down. These factors do not affect interest at all.

Islam does not deny that capital is a very powerful factor

in the creation of wealth as also in its growth; nor is Islam against giving capital its due share for the valuable assistance it renders; nor is Islam blind to the fact that capital will not be forthcoming, unless the terms are made attractive. What Islam does not sanction is arbitrary determination of the rate of increase prior to the services rendered by capital and prior to the process of production itself.

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Enterprise and capital are two very important factors in the process of production, The rewards of enterprise vary according to the balance-sheet. Islam insists that the rewards of capital should change accordingly. Both of them should bear the loss or share the gains. Islam would have capital take all the risks to which enterprise is exposed. Regretably, undue importance has been attached to capital that is not available, unless the terms are made attractive, and unless it is insured against risks. Islam does not view the situation that way; it condemns an earning free of risk and effort. This is the basic difference between modern economics and Islamic system so far as interest is concerned. The difference of apprpach becomes quite justifiable if we discuss the subject in terms of consequences. Present day misery, over-all depression, financial chaos, and wide-spread disorder, are largely the products of interest. But the other side still argues that supply of interest-free capital is a fond dream; and that the world-business would come to a sudden halt and the banks would fail if the interest were abolished. Industry, agriculture, trade and commerce all need huge out-lays; similarly governments require staggering sums, for development plans and defence purposes. "How to provide for all the projects"? They ask. Yet the argument is not as flawless as it appears. Granting that interest encourages flow of capital, we should not forget that it also adversely affects the demand of money. Interest invariably raises the minimum acceptable level of profit. Translating it into practical terms, a field of business will not attract capital, unless it has the prospects of yielding 10 to 12 per cent profit. The profit percentage must be higher enough to warrant the investment of the capital borrowed at current rate

of interest. What does it mean? Many useful avenues of business, and a great number of natural resources too, falling short of the profit target should remain un-explored. All this tends to bring down the demand of capital, halting economic growth, causing depression and unemployment.

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Secondly, interest creates inflation in a country; take the case of cotton-products. The grower draws loan on interest to improve his farming; so far, so good. Yet he will have to raise the price of cotton to make profit since interest is an additional expenditure. Next the owner of a ginning factory receives credit at a given rate, and the price of the processed commodity goes up further. The owners of spinning factories, of textile concerns, whole-sale dealers and retail traders, keep on raising the price all along the line, till the finished product is sold in the market at a much higher price than it should, were there no interest. To sum up, the market price of a commodity is indicative of the measure of interest paid at various stages of its manufacture.

We have seen how interest raises price-level which curtails purchasing power in general, reduces the demand of money, causes cut-backs in production; and eventually leads to unemployment and depression. In theory the foregoing objections against interest are quite weighty, yet when we come to the practical side, the problem assumes a baffling complexity. There is no denying the fact that under the prevailing conditions availability of interest-free capital is next to impossible. Interest, no doubt, is the most powerful single incentive to capital. The question is still unsettled as to how the required out-lays should be obtained, if interest were abolished; and what, if any, solution Islam offers, since the strongest opposition to the practice comes from this quarter. I am afraid I have no definite answer to the problem; it is so vast and complex as to defy individual attempts at solution. To my mind, the matter has to do more with practice than theory. Mere speculation in matters of practical import is utterly fruitless. Secondly, only a person in the thick of economic battle has the necessary qualifications to

find an answer to the problems. We know shoe-pinch can best be understood by the wearer himself ; and one who is in *it*, is more likely to find the way out. At this stage I beg to present a hypothetical case. Supopsing, there were a divine, recognized as an authority in the matters of religion and having a business commanding a great deal of respect among the masses, and to the tune of millions or billions. The person, obviously, has immense liabilities, and needs capital on a vast scale to meet them. My contention is that such a person more than anyone else, has to devise means for the provision of capital without violating Islamic injunctions. His brain can grasp the complex and ramified details in a way inconceivable to the outsiders. For the same reason, the Muslim scholars have been unable to find any pragmatic solution to the difficulties in the field of capital-supply. They have had no practical experience; their cloistered life has kept them away, from, as it were, the world of man. Therefore they have not been in a position to draw up a workable alternative to be followed after the prohibition of interest.

Having stated my limitations, I venture to suggest some possible measures to overcome the complications caused by the abolition of interest. The measures are Islamic as also practical. In this connection I need to explain some of the fundamentals of our religion.

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(1) One of the established principles of Islam is that every imperative is attended with qualifications. Sometimes conditions are singularly unfavourable for the implementation of a command. Islam takes cognisance of the exceptional situations in relation to a specific command ; and stipulates different modes of conformity accordingly. For instance, the original injunction makes it obligatory on every Muslim to observe prayers five times a day with proper rituals such as standing Qibla-ward and doing prescribed ablutions ; yet if necessity forbids, he may observe his prayers without these rituals. Similarly under compelling circumstances, ablutions could be replaced by the wiping of limbs with clean dust ; if a person is unable to stand from sickness or other reasons, he may observe his

prayers sitting or lying. In this illustration we have noticed a progressive relaxation of the ordinance in proportion to the gravity of situation, which can be applied to the subject under discussion, thus the contradictions after the abolition of interest could be removed in two stages. Interim arrangement for a given period and a lasting solution after that. First I shall deal with the permanent solution and then take up the interim measures to be implemented.

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(2) Another fundamental of Islam states that just as the subjects have certain duties to the ruler, so has the ruler certain reponsibilities towards his subjects. If a ruler prohibits a certain course of action, he must find out a lawful alternative to it to eliminate unnecessary complications. Thus an Islamic state is duty-bound to furnish other sources of capital-supply when she decides to do away with interest. It is, doubtlessly, against the spirit of Islam to impose restrictions without attempting to solve the problems issuing therefrom. While the principle has Quranic ratification, I would also like to quote an observation of the Holy Prophet in explanation to it. He said, "A person who abides by the decrees of Islamic state, having faith in their validity, is a trust of God and his Prophet". It means nothing but that the hardships from compliance to an ordinance are to be alleviated by the state herself. The observation also makes it quite clear that, apart from being a Muslim with faith and good deeds, one has to obey the orders of Islamic state and accept them in theory and practice, in order to become a citizen and his Prophet's trust. An Islamic state has no duty toward those who are Muslims but do not accept the orders of that state. The tradition has it that a number of converts resided in their native land outside the jurisdiction of the Islamic State duriug the days of the Prophet. The Prophet clarified his position vis-a-vis those converts in the following words, "I have no obligation towards the Muslims living under alien rule among non-believers". In this way he expressed his inability to give them any legal guarantee, and for reasons quite obvious. There is, of course, no religious discrimination against them; they are

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the members of Islamic fraternity, and as such, brethren of equal rank. But so far as their civic rights are concerned, no legislative obligation is laid on them, and for the same, they are granted no costitutional safe-guards. Duties or guarantees go '*pari passu*' in Islam. It would be pertinent at this point to put down an observation of Hazrat Umar. According to him a law that cannot be enforced, that is, of which the state cannot cope with the consequence need not be framed at all. In deference to this principle, the armies retreating from Hamas in Syria refunded the taxes to the natives, since they were unable to fulfil the guarantees given in return for those.

(3) The next fundamendal states that the liabilities of God and His Prophet, whenever referred to in the legislative context, stand for those living in the Islamic state. For instance, the Mnslims are directed to refer their disputes to God and his Prophet, that is, to the powers enforcing Quranic injunctions. On another occasion the Prophet said, "The fifth part of war-spoils should go to God and His Prophet". Here again God and His Prophet are a synonym for the state.

Now that I have explained, at some length, some of the fundamentals of Islam, I take up the permanent solution to the Problems that crop up after the abolition of interest. We all know that interest is not a matter of individual concern, it affects the economy of a society as a whole. It is to off-set these effects that interest is forbidden—by act of law—to be enforced by the Islamic state. The state has also to implement measures for removing the complications following in the wake of the ordinance. The verses on *Riba*, quoted earlier, state emphatically that God and his Prophet shall wage war against money-lenders, and see to it that the original sums are returned. Obviously, it is not possible to adopt such means without administrative powers. To sum up, an Islamic state is under obligation to prohibit interest and find answer to the attendant problems. The legislative enactments in this regard shall be based on the following principles.

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(1) The state shall not enforce an ordinance, unless it can afford to do so. That enforcement implies mere notification and indiscriminate penalisation of offenders, is far from the truth. It is, on the other hand, a two-fold process : power to implement an order and capacity to prevail over the resultant difficulties. Going back to earlier days we find that Islamic society had been groaning long under the bnrden of interest before it was prohibited. The unwholesome effects of the practice had throughly corrupted the social organism. What form of depravity and evil had it not caused, that it was capable of? Yet the ordinance concerning interest was not proclaimed until a little before the last pilgrimage, when the Islamic state had been consolidated enough to overcome the problems following its enforcement. Certainly the ordinance was delayed with no other purpose than that of enabling the state to meet its enoromous obligations. The Holy Prophet once observed that Islam had started from scratch in respect of temporal power ; and that it would return to its original state in course of time ; which means as in the beginning, so in the later period the injunction will be implemented progressively.

(2) An Islamic State shall strive for a society where material values have in no way, precedence over moral values. A society having such businessmen as Hazrat Usman and Abu Bakar, being ever ready to sacrifice all for the state, can have few problems. In the days of the Holy Prophet, it was demanded of a Muslim to pay his Zakat dues. Unluckily the man got rash, "What are they up to Zakat and taxes all the time? It must have a limit", he said. The matter was reported to the Holy Prophet. "We shall never accept Zakat from him in future", the Holy Prophet declared. Far from being happy, the man got hysterical from grief. He appeared at the Prophet's house making a moving appeal for remission which was sternly turned down. His entreaties grew more pathetic, but to no use. The man was not let off in the reign of Abu Bakar. The Caliph said, "I dare not touch what the Prophet did not". God had provided the man with material

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riches in plenty, yet the world had grown dark in his eyes for all his wealth : the kingdom of God on earth was not to accept anything from him. The penance did not end here ; it continued right up till the end of Caliph Omar's reign. But these are the things of by-gone days ; no state at present can conceive of imposing such penalties. Far from grieving, the defaulters would rejoice at being treated that way, calling it a good riddance ; such is the extent of corruption in our society. The society such as existed in the days of the Prophet and the first four Caliphs could easily manage the requisite capital for personal, commercial and national demands.

(3) The third objective before an Islamic State should be to promote the growth of joint-stock concerns and to devise machinery for the maintenance of accounts as would simplfy lengthy procedural complications, eliminate the chances of embezzlement, fraud, and misappropriation to keep up the confidence of share-holders in managing bodies. Supply of capital would be little affected after the abolition of interest, if there were abundance of wealth and booming prosperity all around. The banks with high prestige could obtain loans for investment in less risky fields on the promise of a reasonable share of profit.

We should also consider whether injunctions against interest are applicable to the dealings concluded between public and State and whether the State could utilize the public loans after guaranteeing a fixed rate of increase on the sum. The situation is exceptional indeed, for a government is responsible to the public for their needs as is a father or a guardian to his wards. The guarantee for a fixed increase from the government, therefore, should be viewed in this light. With such considerations in mind, the Judge and Arbiter of our times (the Promised Messiah) justified the profit on provident fund, (which is interest in fact). Another related problem, that of commuting pensions, should also be judged in the same manner. I would quote two verses from the Holy Quran to support my assertions.

من ذا الذی یقرض اللہ قرضاً حسناً فیضاعفہ لہ اضعافاً کثیراً

"Who is it that lends to Allah a goodly loan

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that We may multiply it for him manifold".(2 :245)

ان تقرضوا الله قرضاً حسناً يضاعف لكم

"If you lend to Allah a goodly loan, He will multiply it for you". (64 : 18)

The verses spell out the divine promise to the faithful of manifold increase on the sum of loans advanced to Allah

(4) As I have mentioned earlier, God and His Prophet stand for Islamic State in legislative and financial injunctions. I may put down an event to illustrate the point. During the War of Trenches (*Al-Ahzab*) the holy Prophet contacted a Jew for a loan to carry out war efforts The Jew declining the loan, observed rather sarcastically, "Why? Is Allah so needy and in want that you raise funds for Him". Allah sent the following verse in reply : "And surely Allah has heard the utterance of those who said, "Allah is poor and we are rich. We shall record what they have said." Notice while the loan was sought to meet state-expenses, the would-be lenders were admonished for opposing God and not advancing loan to Him. Another occurrence is worth narrating at this point. The Holy Prophet collected a large number of camels for war purposes, promising the owner two-fold return, subject to the availability of war-booty in sufficient quantity. (*Masnad Ahmad, Abu Daud*) Ordinarily, all unequal barter dealings and loans on such terms are forbidden in Islam. In the light of the foregoing discussion, we should determine if the state may promise a fixed increase on the loans granted by her to the public. Considerations of space do not permit me to go into details, yet we come across not a few instances in Islamic History demonstrating that the state and the individual are not governed by the same moral code.

(5) Another fact in this connection is worth attention. The laws framed by the Islamic State in the light of basic principles of Islam tend to assume the authority of Divne commandments. We can pick up a number of precedents from the times of the first four Caliphs : elimination of the portion for reconciliation of hearts from *Zakat* ; discrimination in the distribution of allowances; alteration in the laws concerning the division of land.

Similarly under certain conditions, an Islamic court may order the recipient of the loan, to pay a fixed rate of increase on the sum.

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Now I take up the interim measures to be followed after the abolition of interest. Much as we should desire other-wise, the Muslims are not in a position to eliminate the undesirable effects of the practice on international level for want of power. Even if the followers of Islam were to abstain from interest-oriented dealings, it would little affect the deep-rooted practice or reduce the damage it is doing the world over unless the Muslims control the world economy, and have power to mould it as they will, they cannot eliminate interest; with the result that injunctions against interest will assume spiritual rather than economic significanee i.e. the Muslims will not be finding answer to their financial difficulties by refraining from interest; they would rather, be adding to them. The situation, disconcerting though it may be, makes it all the more necessary for Muslims to keep in mind great spiritual value of the injunction. Once the Muslims yielded to the hostile current, rather than resist them they would be swept off their feet, never to regain their original foot-hold. And what is more, they shall never be able to accomplish what they have pledged to: to revive the Faith and to restore the Law. When an evil custom grows common enough to be practised with easy conscience, its eradication turns out to be an almost hopeless task. The Holy Prophet had in mind the weakness of flesh and blood when he said, "Allah has His own grazing grounds hedged with limits set by Him like many of us have ours. Take care you do not step into His grounds, not only this, see to it, too, you abide at a comfortable distance, for you must have seen the beasts grazing about hedges are prone to tresspass into the fields. Once you wander close to the limits set by Him, you are sure to fall into the trap". Many of the Islamic injunctions are in fact, true preventive measures. I now take leave to quote an observation of the Promised Messiah concerning the issue:

"Interest stands for money acquired without the

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expense of labour or effort".

The situation today is pretty confusing. Interest has penetrated into almost every field of economic activity. The problem, therefore, needs an altogether new approach.

We are to give special consideration to the last words because with the Islamic system having gone to pieces and present-day world being subjected to constant economic upheavals, grave problems have cropped up for the Muslims to solve. We should make a cool and rational analysis of the situation. Mere display of sentiment or slogan - mongering wo'nt do at all. It is no use drawing up ambitious plans that are not practicable. Such a wild-goose chase is going to shatter whatever little faith the Muslims have in their religion.

Nothing is more desirable for the Muslims than that the capital should be available readily and in abundance even after the abolition of interest. That, infact, is ideally best, for it does not raise any uncomfortable and moral issues. But the going gets pretty rough when interest-free capital is either extremely difficult or down-right impossible to obtain for national, commercial and industrial needs. But the pity is that our Muslim scholars do not realize the complex nature of this problem. They assert that nothing is more important and imperative than compliance with the commandments of God as they stand, and reliance upon His Grace and that we need not bother about the intervening difficulties. But the idea, on the face of it, is attractive. Its application, however, to the practical world is likely to bring about untold economic miseries while our respected scholars would watch with cold unconcern a nation going to the dogs and her business to shambles.

In fact, their position boils down to this, "our duty is no more and no less than to convey divine commandments to the faithful. They would themselves have to cope with the dangers besetting their path." Obviously, the approach is the least reasonable. Champions of Islam who regard it their mission to enforce the Islamic way of life, must come forward with solutions to the attendant problems.

A section of Muslim scholars, while admitting that the

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supply of capital is a vital need, suggests another remedy. They argue that a state where Islamic laws are not in force ought to be considered a land of disbelievers. Therefore such transactions as involve interest might be concluded with the subjects of a non-Muslim state. Elaborating the point they maintain that a Muslim has a right to the wealth and property of non-Muslims and that the Muslim armies marching into the lands of non-believers are permitted to seize the property of the nations; in the same way a Muslim is within his right, in exacting interest from non-Muslims. In fact, he will be receiving by way of interest a part of what already belongs to him. This attitude, to say the least smacks of barbarism and is utterly against the humanitarian spirit of Islam. It is also argued in support of the view that a Muslim living in a non-Islamic state is in a disadvantageous position as compared with a non-Muslim to safe-guard his interests, for he does not enjoy the protection guaranteed under Islamic law. We should deal with the non-believers in the same way as we are dealt with by them. While under legal protections a non-Muslim draws interest from a Muslim, the Muslim may also demand interest on the loans advanced by him to the non-Muslims. They assert that the principle of relative-equality is quite an important one in Islam, and that it has been applied to in several other contexts. The solution, however, suffers from over-simplification. The problem is far more complicated than imagined while the foregoing explanation being parochial as well as clumsy is utterly unacceptable to a rational and inqusitive mind.

We may, however, approach the problem from another angle. As mentioned earlier, Islamic injunctions are subject to relaxation under necessity. We need not have any qualms of conscience in regarding interest as a necessity in the present-day world. As other nations are making big leaps forward due, in part, to the abundant supply of capital, the Muslims would be signing their own death-warrants, if they failed to compete, collectively and individually, with the rest of the world.

Dangers are of two kinds—apparant and latent. The first

burst out suddenly and are perceptible immediately ; the second are slow in showing up, and gradual in taking effect. Economic dangers belong to the latter class. Yet these are, in no way, less disastrous or ominous, than the apparent ones. We are granted amnesty from an ordinance. When peril to life or property is sudden and apparent, to the extent of eating pork and offering bribe—We might just as well have similar concessions in dangers that are not so visible.

We have no reason to believe that only injunctions against interest are categorical or that sudden death and extreme hunger are the only exceptional circumstances in which pork may be eaten, and others' property may be siezed. In fact, what matters is not the means but the end. Under necessity we may employ any kind of means, moral or otherwise, to achieve a noble objective. Considerations of space do not allow me to elaborate it further. I shall however, content myself with a few instances from Islamic history bearing on the subject. A man made a conjugal visit to his wife in fast. Repenting it bitterly afterward he talked to some of his friends and sought their help. They painted his offence in harrowing colours and shrank from him. Finding no other way, he nerved himself up, and saw the Holy Prophet in person, to tell his tale of woe. The Prophet consoled him with the kindest words, and hushed his fears. A little later, when he was composed, the Holy Prophet asked him if he could observe fast for sixty days in penance. By now the man had got hold enough to say, "I could not go through a day's fast, how shall I observe sixty?" "All right, then serve meals to sixty needy persons." The Prophet suggested.

"But I cannot afford to do it."

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"Well, then wait and we shall see what can be done."

Meanwhile a basket-ful of dates was brought to the Holy Prophet, which he instantly handed over to the man with directions to distribute it among the poor. But said the man, "O Prophet of God! is there any family in Medina more deserving than my own." The Holy Prophet could hardly control his laughter, and allowed the man to have it. Returning to his friends he said to them that they had almost

killed him, but he had never seen a man more sympathetic and more sensative to human weaknesses than the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him).

Notice how beautifully human limitations have been dealt with and how cleanly the spirit of Islamic injunctions has been vivified by this instance. On the occasion of the last Pilgrimage, the Holy Prophet declared Mecca and its suburbs a sanctuary, forbidding the Muslims to cut wild grass or trees in it. Hazrat Abbas requested that they be allowed to crop "Azkhar" (a variety of wild grass) since they needed it badly for their camels. The Prophet conceded to his request. At another time the Holy Prophet said that it was good for a pilgrim to have his head shaved, and prayed that God might bless him.

Pray also for those who feel uneasy being shorn of hair". His followers said.

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"They be blessed likewise." said the benign Prophet.

On another occassion the Prophet announced that Medina, too, was a sanctuary. His companions said to him that they had to cut the undergrowth to feed their live-stock. The Holy Prophet acceded to their request.

The Muslims are required to exchange their dates by measurement or by weight not by approximation. An exchange based on approximation, was regarded as interest by the Holy Prophet. Under necessity, however, the Muslims are permitted to use this mode of exchange.

In numerous other places do we find that Islamic commands have been relaxed under compelling circumstances. We may get a clue from this to solve our own problems. But utmost care and caution is needed in this respect; not the least part of which is that the decisions on important matters should be arrived at collectively. Each one should not gang his own gait. That would promote disorder and chaos. In this connection, we need to guard against a very great danger i.e. relaxation of an ordinance tends to perpetuate the evil practice against which it was framed.

Eng : M. R. Akhtar

GOG AND MAGOG—II

Maulvi Abul Ata

The last word about Gog and Magog

The various etymological and historical references quoted above, no doubt, help us, to a certain extent, in determining the origin of Gog and Magog. But Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah and Mahdi, as a result of his etymological investigation and above all, on the authority of the Holy Quran declared that by Gog and Magog is meant the Slavonic and Anglo-Saxan races of Modern Europe who are controlling the destinies of the whole world of to-day. The divinely—appointed arbiter Hazrat Ahmad says :-

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> Gog and Magog are two nations mentioned also in previous scriptures. The reason why they are so called is that these nations were destined to make the most of fire and spread over the world like wild-fire controlling it from every point of vantage.
>
> (2) The word یاجوج و ماجوج is derived from اجیج whichmeans fire. Hence Gog and Magog are, as I have been given to understand from on high, the two nations who make the most of fire—their steamers, their railways and their machines are all run by fire and their wars are also fought by fire ; in short, they excel all other nations in utilizing fire in their various pursuits. Hence their name Gog and Magog and they are the nations of Europe and America.
>
> (Ayyam-us-Sulh P. 182)

(3) یاجوج (Gog) is derived from اجیج (fire). This mean that Gog and Magog will have much to do with fire, they would be experts in the use of

fire. Their control over fire will be thorough and complete. No other nation would be able to compete with them in the use of fire. It is evident, therefore, that these nations make the most of fire in their daily pursuits. Think of the number of machines which are worked by fire. Year in and year out, the use of fire is ever on the increase.

Both the British as well as the Russians are images or exact copies of Gog and Magog. Both the attributes of Gog and Magog and of anti-Christ, which were differently and individually found elsewhere, are now found collectively in them.

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(4) Gog and Magog means a people who will become possessed of complete earthly powers and the cycle of their earthly progress will be brought to consummation. یاجوج و ماجوج come from the word اجیج which means a ball of fire. So Gog and Magog are so called because they would have complete control over fire. They would make frequent and intensive use of fire in their social affairs. Their steamers, their trains, and their machines would be worked by fire. They would fight their battles with fire-arms etc.

Moreover Gog and Mogog will have a fiery nature. They would show the highest pride of place in their dealings and would manifest fiery qualities of swiftness, dexterity and deceitfulness.

(Zamima Tohfa-i-Golarvia, Margin-P. 219)

(5) The European nations have the characteristics both of being یاجوج و ماجوج (Gog and Magog) and الدجال (the Anti-Christ). Because in the tradi-

tions it is said of Gog and Magog that none would have the power to fight against them, so much so that the weapon which the Promised Messiah would use against them would be that of prayer. Now it is evident that none can oppose the European Powers on the field of battle. The Holy Quran also confirms the view when it says وهم من كل حدب ينسلون (They would control all the strategic points on the globe.

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And again, in the traditions, it is said that الدجال (The Anti-Christ) would be the most deceitful personage in the world and would cause disorder and turmoil in the world of religion. And the Holy Quran says يحرفون الكلم عن مواضعه that is, it is the characteristic of Christian clergymen that they change the order of words in the Scriptures.

(Chashma-i-Marifat, footnote P. 78-79)

(6) In short, it is evident on the authority of the Bible that, the Christian sects of Europe are no other than Gog and Magog and on the other, the characteristics of Gog and Magog which the Holy Quran has depicted, are truly applicable to the European States. We just read in the Holy Quran that they (Gog aud Magog) would have ascendency over all other powers and they would reach the highest pinnacles of glory. We also read in the traditions that no earthly state would have the power to oppose them on the battle-field. So it is absolutely decided that the modern European nations are no other than Gog and Magog. He must be a self-willed man who denies the Divine words.

(7) It is now well established that Gog and

Magog are the two prosperous nations of the world - the Britishers and the Russians who run down from every height with their God-given faculties.

Azala-i-Auham (II) P. 209)

فاعلموا ارشدكم الله تعالى ان هذين الاسمين لقوم تفرق شعبهم فى زماننا هذا آخرالزمان و هم فى وصف متشاركون وهم قوم الروس و قوم البراطنة و اخوانهم والدجال فهم فيج قسيسين ودعاة الانجيل الذين يخلطون الباطل بالحق و يدجلون

"It should be remembered that Gog and Magog are the two names of a nation whose scions have spread out in our own times. Both have common characteristics. They are Anglo-Saxons and Rnssians and their brethren (the Americans). Dajjal (Anti-Christ) also means the clergymen who preach the Gospel of Christ. They mix up truth and falsehood and are extremely decieteful.

(Aina-i-Kamalat-i-Islam p. 459-60)

(9) Verily Gog and Magog are the Christians of Russia and the British isles.

It is evident from the quotations given above that the Promised Messiah in the very beginning of the fourteenth century of the Muslim era declared that by Gog and Magog is meant the Russians and the British.

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Scholars' Confirmation

The dominance of Gog and Magog in world affairs is a sure sign of the time of the Promised Messiah. It also goes a long way to prove the truth of his claim to Messiahship.

Although the Ulema do not openly admit the truth of the statement but some modern scholars do not hesitate to declare that the Gog and Magog are no more than the Russians and Anglo-Saxon races.

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Abdul Jamal Abbasi, author of the *Hikmat-i-Baligha*, writes :

(i) In olden books of history and the scriptures of prophets the Russians are called Gog and Magog.

(ii) Some scions of the Magog went over to Europe from Sythia during the period of Gog's settlement while others siding with the latter created disorder in the lands of the Tartars.

(iii) ماغوغ (Maghugh), son of Japheth, son of Noah, is Magog of the Greeks and ماجوج of the Arabs. Ibn-i-Khaldoon calls Espince, king of Spain, the contemporary of Tariq, and the Spaniards as the descendents of Magog.

(Hikmat-i-Baligha, pp. 585-86)

(2) Dr. Mohammad Iqbal, the Poet-Philosopher sings :

Both Labour and Capital are now, well arrayed in the world. Let us see how many ambitions are crushed to death. Reason and strategy cannot keep under control this horrible calamity. The hordes of Gog and Magog have been let loose so that the Muslims may see with their own eyes what is the explanation of the Quranic verse :

و هم من کل حدب ینسلون

(And they will run down from every point of vantage)

(Bang-i-Dira, P. 334)

(3) Maulana Abdul Majid Daryabadi writes :

They (Gog and Magog) may be the creatures of God but the seas, the ports, the ships and their banners, the navy and the naval commanders, cruisers, dread-noughts, torpedoes and destroyers all call aloud that the authority rests with Gog. If, under the cir-

cumstances, as these, you are told that Gog and Magog would drink up the waters of the ocean why should you wait for the fulfilment of the proyhecy at some future time.

(The book سفر حجاز Chapter, The Kamran Sea. Also see Badr, May 2, 1957, P. 2)

Two periods of Gog and Magog

An intensive study of the Bible, the Holy Quran and the Traditions clearly shows that there are two phases of the mischievous activities of Gog and Magog. In the first phase of their life they would be confined within the limits of their home country and in the second phase they would spread forth to all the four corners of the world and everywhere would cause mischief and disorder :

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Although the term mischief-mongers, may justly be applied to Gog and Magog, because they were given to plunder and loot from the very beginning of their political life, yet in the first phase of their activity they were confined by Zul Qurnain to stay within the limits of their home-land and prevented from doiug any harm to their neighbours. The king set up a rampart between the mountain and the deep sea so that Gog and Magog could not scale it nor could they break through it.

The Holy Quran refers not only to a historical event of the past but also it foretells a grand prophey which was destined to see the light of day in the later days. The Promised Messiah writes :

"It should be remembered that the first interpretation of the verse which belongs to a distant past is also correct. But the Holy Quran does not relate, like ordinary story-tellers, old stories but each and every story that it tells, is, in fact, a prophecy and the story of Zul-Qurnain is a grand prophecy which was to be fulfilled

in the latter days."

(Brahin-i-Ahmadiyya Part 5, P. 91)

The Holy Quran in the Chapter on 'Prophets' explains, under the word فتحت (would be let loose) the extraordinary dominance and progress which Gog and Magog were destined to make in the world in the time of the Promised Messiah.

III

Exodus of Gog and Magog

We come to know from the study of the Bible that Gog and Magog were to remain confined for a thousand years within the limits of their home-lands, after the Holy Prophet's commission to prophethood. Again the Bible tells us that they (Gog and Magog) would be let loose after one thousand years of their confinement, and would spread out to all the four corners of the earth.

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Concerning the Holy Prophet Muhammad's commission to prophethood, we read in the Bible:

> And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and his name was written, so that none but he himself knew.
>
> And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood; and his name is called the Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.
>
> And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he

> treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of God Almighty. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS And LORD of LORDS.
>
> (John : Revelation 19 : 11-16)

As a result of the Holy Prophet's commission to prophethood the Satan with all his powers was bound down for a thousand years. We read in the Bible.

> "And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan and bound him for a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years be fulfilled; and after that he must be loosed a little season."
>
> (Revelation 20 : 1-3)

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After the expiry of 1,000 years Satan will again make his appearance and will create disorder in the world jointly with Gog and Magog so much so that there shall be a spiritual war between the forces of good and evil.

The Bible is eloquent on the point :

> "And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison. And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle; the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city; and fire came down from

God out of heaven, and devoured them."
(Ravelation 20 : 7-9)

It is evident from these quotations that Gog and Magog in their first phase of life will be confined within the four walls of their prison while in the second phase of their activities which begins 1,000 years after the Holy Prophet of Islam they would create great mischief in the world. There will be a spiritual war between the forces of evil and the forces of good in which Islam is destined to come out victorious.

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IV

Zul-Qurnain

There is a Zul-Qurnain for each of the two periods of Gog and Magog. The first Zul-Qurnain managed to confine Gog and Magog within bounds when their machinations were of local importance only. The Holy Quran speaks of Zul-Qurnain as well as of the rampart he put forth to stop their inroads.

Commentators of the Holy Quran have differed among themselves as to who the Zul-Qurnain was. Some of them, impressed by the vast conquests of Alexander the Great, have taken him for Zul-Qurnain. Maulana Noor-ud-Din, the well-known physician-philosopher of the Indian sub-continent was of the view that Kaikabad of Persia was the Zul-Qurnain. Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifa-tul-Masih II, as a result of his investigation declared Cyrus of Persia to be the Zul-Qurnain. He writes :

My revered teacher Hazrat Maulvi Noor-ud-Din's basis of research on Zul-Qurnain is the Bible. He refers to Daniel's vision in the Bible which runs thus : I saw a ram which had two horns—I saw the ram pushing westwarad, and northward ; so that no beast might stand before him. "Neither was there any that could deliver out of his hand ; but he did according to his will". (Daniel 8 : 3—4)

Then Daniel says, "I was given to understand the meaning of the vision : The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia. (Daniel 8 : 20)

So according to my revered teacher, the Zul-Qurnain was a certain king of Persia—most probably it was Kaikabad.

(Tafsir-i-Kabir, the Chapter 'Kahf' P-987).

So the truth about Zul-Qurnain is this that he is Cyrus, the Pious and revealed king of Media and Persia. The Holy Quran has mentioned him within the framework of past history. Then Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II gives, in a nut-shell, the result of his investigation in the following words :

> It has already been established that someone among the kings of Media and Persia is meant to be Zul-Qurnain as shown in Daniel's vision. We have to see which of these kings was possessed of the necessary qualifications. The quality of 'revelation' is the one that is the most important and tops the list. Now history tells us that there was one among the kings of Persia who was gifted with revelation and whose piety and goodness is supported by a number of prophets of God. This is Cyrus (Latinized form of the Persian name Kursh).

(Tafsir-i-Kabir, Chapter 'Kahf', P 991)

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The Zul-Qurnain in his second appearance or advent is no other than the Promised Messiah.

The second advent of Zul-Qurnain for the purpose of putting down the mischief and disorder created by Gog and Magog during the time of their second appearance is clearly stated in the Holy Quran as well as the traditions of the Holy Prophet of Islam (peace be on him). The calamity of Gog and Magog in their Second Phase is also called the calamity of Antichrist. Hazrat Mirza Bashir - ud - Din Mahmud Ahmad,

Khalifa-tul-Masih II says :

> The Holy Quran and the Traditions of the Holy Prophet are eloquent on the point that the deterioration of Islam in the latter days will mark the political and religious ascendency of Gog and Magog and of the Anti-chirst. It is also evident that Gog and Magog are but two names of the followers of the same religion with the only difference that Gog and Magog refers to the political ascendency while Antichirst refers to the religious false propaganda carried on by th votaries of the Christian religion.
>
> (Tafsir - i - Kabir, P. 990 (Kahf)

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A question answered :

It may be reasonably asked how Zul - Qurnain II is the Promised Messiah. The following tradition provides a suitable answer to the above question.

فبينما هو كذالك اوحى الله الى عيسى انى قد اخرجت عباداً لى لا يدان لاحدلقتالهم فحرز عبادى الى الطور و يبعث الله ياجوج و ماجوج و هم من كل حدب ينسلون (صحيح مسلم بحواله مشكواة 473)

> "During this while God will reveal to the Promised Messiah that He has produced such fighting men as shall not be opposed on the field of battle by any one. Then God will raise Gog and Magog who would run down from every point of vantage".

Now it is crystal clear from this tradition that Gog and Magog will appear during the time of the Promised Messiah and that the Promised Messiah would provide an antidote to counteract the poison effused by Gog and Magog. The words of the

tradition "Lead your men to mount (Toor)" signify that the Promised Messiah would not use material means to defeat Gog and Magog but vanquish them by showing heavenly signs.

The Promised Messiah himself writes :

> "The Zul-Qurnain for this Ummah is the writer himself. There is a prophecy in the Holy Quran about me as counter - part of Zul-Qurnain the first. But only those who are wise enough will profit by it. It is evident that Zul-Qurnain is he who appears at the head of two centuries and it is a strange coincidence that I appeared at the head of every two centuries which people of all nations have devised in their own way.
>
> (Brahin - i - Ahmadiyya V, P. 90)

It is now clear that the Russians and the British are the Gog and Magog of our modern times and their preponderance and predominance over the whole world are self-evident truths. The Promised Messiah with all his claims is also there. Let us now see what would be the end of Gog and Magog of modern times.

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The End of Gog and Magog

All heavenly scriptures foretell destruction and annihilation of Gog and Magog. We read in the Bible :

> "And fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them" (Rev. 20 : 9)

Again the Bible says :

> "And I will send a fire on Magog and among them that dwell carelessly in the isles : and they shall know that I am the Lord"
>
> (Ezek : 39 : 36)

How forcibly the Holy Quran declares :

يرسل عليكما شواظ من نار و نحاس فلا تنتصران

"There shall be sent against you a flame of fire, and smoke; and you shall not be able to help yourselves."

(Al-Rahman 35 : 36)

The Holy Prophet (peace be on him) says that Gog and Magog after predominance will cause to diffuse atheism and heresy. The actual words of the tradition are :

يقولون لقد قتلنا من فى الارض فلنقتل من فى السماء فيرمون

بنشابهم الى السماء فيرد الله عليهم نشابهم مخضوبة د ماً

و يحصر نبى الله و اصحابه

They (Gog and Magog) will say, we have killed all those who were on the earth. Let us now kill those who are in the heaven. So they will throw their darts towards the sky. God will send back their arrows drenched in blood. Then the Prophet of God (The Promised Messiah and his companions) will be hemmed in on all sides. What will happen at last? The Holy Prophet says :

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"God will, then afflict them with a pestilence of which they would die a sudden death with their limbs scattered here and there. The final annihilation of these nations will be caused by their own conflict against each other. The world will then be finally relieved of this obnoxious pestilence. Heresy, deciet and atheism will come to an end, the religion of the Cross will crumble to dust and the earth will again be filled with the unity of God.

VII

Calamity only Temporary. Gog, Magog and the Arabs

The annihilation of Gog and Magog is sure to take place

but before their (Gog and Magog's) final overthrow and destruction, the Arabs will have to suffer a set-back, a severe shaking of which the Holy Prophet (peace be on him) was informed in a vision. Here we have the full tradition :

> "Hazrat Zainab (a wife of the Holy Prophet) reports that the Holy Prophet one day came to her house in a troubled state of mind. He said the Arabs would be hard hit by the mischief which is near at hand. I saw in a vision that the rampart (preventing the inroads of Gog & Magog) has been breached to the extent of a hole as big as that of a mouse. Hazrat Zainab said, "O Prophet of God, shall we come to ruin even if there are good people among us?" The Holy Prophet replied: "Yes, when the majority of them are evil doers".
>
> (Bokhari: Gog and Magog, Vol IV. P.155)

Tirmizi has to say:

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استيقظ رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم من يوم محمر وجهه وهو يقول لااله الاالله ويل للعرب من شر قد اقترب فتح اليوم من ردم ياجوج و ماجوج مثل هذه و حلق باصبعية الابهام والتى مليها قالت زينب انبت جعش فقلت يا رسول الله افنهلک وفينا الصالحون قال نعم اذا كثر الخبث

The Holy Prophet woke up from his sleep while his face was blush-rose. He saw in a vision that the wall or rampart constructed to prevent the inroads of Gog and Magog was breached and they had come out of their confinement, they would create a great mischief for the Arabs, as a consequence of which they (Arabs) would suffer a crushing defeat. The words ويل للعرب من شر قد اقترب are very significant. The calamity was not to befall the Muslims as a whole, but only the Arabs who would be proclaiming Arabism as their national outcry. There

are other traditions which speak of the tragedy arising out of Palestine. The Israel-Arab War of 1967 which resulted in a disasterous defeat of the Arab States is a clear manifestation of the prophecy contained in the tradition. Arab States joined the war under banner of Arabism and suffered a terrible defeat. As a matter of fact, the defeat of Arab States may justly be ascribed to the mechinations of capitalist America and Britain, on the one hand, and the Communist Russia, on the other, who were jointly responsible for the creation of Israel—a wedge driven to divide the unity of Arab States.

As already stated in the light of prophecies contained in the Bible, the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet of Islam, the final destruction of Gog and Magog is near at hand. The Promised Messiah commenting on the verses of the Chapter on "The Cave" writes :-

And God said :

> "This will come to pass by His mercy and His hand will work out everything. No human device will have to do anything with that. And when the days of resurrection are drawn near, mischief will again heave its head. This is the word of God".

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And again God said :

> "Every nation will rise in support of its religion and just as one wave follows up the other, nations will rise against nations. Meanwhile a trumpet will be blown in the heavens, that is to say the God of heavens will raise the Promised Messiah and will give him a large party of devoted followers and show mighty signs in his favour and they will listen to what he (the Promised Messiah) would say. They would run up to the Promised Messiah. Then there will be one, only one herdsman. Those days will be full of perils.

Almighty God will manifest Himself with mighty signs. And those who insist on disbelief, will taste hell in this very world because of a variety of visitations. God says, these are the very people whose eyes were under a veil so as not to heed My warning and they could not even hear.
Do the disbelievers think that they can easily take a poor human for God and leave Me alone? Surely, We have prepared Hell as an entertainment for the disbelievers", That is, terrible signs will be shown which will stand as witnesses for the Promised Messiah.

(Brahahin-i-Ahmadiyya Vol 5, p. 96)

The Promised Messiah again writing in 1908 quotes a verse from the Holy Quran as saying:

"And on that day We shall present Hell, face to face, to the disbelievers. That is those who will refuse to believe in the Promised Messiah will experience a variety of helish chastisement."

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(Chashma-i-Marifat p. 76-77)

Gog and Magog invited to accept Islam

Allama Ahmad bin Abdur Rahman Al-Saqaf writes :-

Hafiz Abu Amar bin Abdul Birr says that the consensus of Mnslim opinion believe in Gog and Magog being the descendents of Japhech, son of Noah. Again he reports that the Holy Prophet (peace be on him) was asked whether he had preached Islam and the unity of God to Gog and Magog. The Holy Prophet replied, on the night of my journey from the Sacred Mosque to the Distant Mosque, I passed by Gog and Magog and preached Islam to them but they refused to accept."

This tradition shows that the Night Journey of the Holy Prophet (peace be on him) has much to do with Gog and Magog. Again it follows that the advent of the Promised Messiah, in whose time Gog and Magog were destined to make their appearance, and invited to Islam, was, in reality, the second advent of the Holy Prophet himself. Again that the Night Journey of the Holy Prophet concerns the second advent of the Holy Prophet and the renaissance of Islam in the latter days. And last, though not the least, is the fact that most of the people of Gog and Magog would not accept the invitation to Islam and consequently would meet a disasterous end.

The last warning to Gog and Magog

The Promised Messiah (1835 - 1908) invited the Christian nations of Europe to accept Islam by means of pamphlets, books and through the pages of the well-known journal *the Review of Religions*. Hazrat Khalifa-tul-Masih II went to their homes and preached Ahmadiyyat or True Islam to them. During this while two disasterous World Wars were forced on them in accordance with the prophecies of the Promised Messiah. The invincible British Empire saw its own downfall and a political revolution humbled the mighty and absolute Czar of Russia to dust. Now the third World War is hovering over their heads and the days are near when the earth will be tumbled down and the heaven will rain fire.

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Providentially enough, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III last year undertook a journey to Europe and exhorted the Christians of Western Europe to accept Islam and save themselves and their children before it is too late. Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III said :

> "The Promised Messiah also prophesied that a third World War of even bigger dimensions would follow the Second. The two opposing camps will clash with such suddenness that

everyone will be caught unawares. Death and destruction will rain from the sky and fierce flames shall engulf the earth.

The colossus of modern civilization will tumble to the ground. Both the Communist as well as the opposing block will perish in the process. Russia and her Satellites on the one hand and the U.S. and her allies on the other, shall be destroyed, their might broken, their civilization ruined and their social and economic systems shattered. The survivors shall stand aghast and amazed at the tragedy. Russia will recover sooner from the calamity than the West, The prophecy is clear that the Russian population will recover and multiply rapidly. They will be reconciled to their Creater and will accept Islam and the Holy Prophet of Islam. People who are seeking to wipe out the name of God from the earth and to drive Him out of the skies will realize the folly of their ways and at long last submit to Him as staunch believers in His Unlty and Oneness.

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"The signs of the revival of Islam are already visible. They may not be very clear yet but they are easily discernible. The sun of Islam will finally rise in its full splendour and illumine the whole world. But before that happens, the world must experience another war a bloodbath—that will leave mankind shaken and chastened.

"But, gentlemen, let us not forget that this like prophecy, all other prophecies, is a warning and its fulfillment can be delayed or even averted provided man turns to his Lord, repents and

mends his ways. He can yet avert Divine wrath if he stops worshipping the false deities of wealth, power and prestige, establishes a genuine relationship with his Lord, refrains from all transgression, does his duty to God and man, and learns to work for true human welfare. It all depends on the nations that dominate the world to-day and who are intoxicated by the heady wine of wealth, power and prestige. Are willing to they shake off this state of inebriation? Are they eager for spiritual bliss and happiness? If not, Divine wrath is bound to descend. If they do not give up their evil ways but persist in their arrogance, no power and no false Gods shall avail them aught against the promised chastisement.

Be kind, therefore, to your own selves and your to children! Listen to the voice of your Lord, most Gracious, ever Merciful. May He smile on you with compassion and grant you the strength and the opportunity to accept and to profit from the truth."

(A Message of Peace and a Word of Warning by Hazrat Mirza Nasir Ahmad, Head of the Ahmadiyya Movemet,)

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